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From Day to Day

with Holmes





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WILLIAM L. HOLMES

From Day to Day With Holmes

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FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES

JANUARY

JANUARY FIRST

Life is a great bundle of little things, I said.
The divinity-student smiled.

You smile, I said. Perhaps life seems to you
a little bundle of great things?

The divinity-student started a laugh, but
suddenly reined it back with a pull, as one
throws a horse on his haunches.—Life is a great
bundle of great things, he said. *The Autocrat.*

JANUARY SECOND

Storms, thunders, waves!
Howl, crash, and bellow till ye get your fill;
Ye sometimes rest; men never can be still
But in their graves. *Daily Trials.*

JANUARY THIRD

The question is not, what it is reasonable for
a man to think about, but what he actually does
think about.

The Professor at the Breakfast Table.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



JANUARY FOURTH

Ah! many lids Love lurks between,
Nor heeds the coloring of his screen;
And when his random arrows fly,
The victim falls, but knows not why.
Gaze not upon his shield of jet,
The shaft upon the string is set;
Look not beneath his azure veil,
Though every limb were cased in mail.

The Dilemma.

JANUARY FIFTH

Memory is a net; one finds it full of fish
when he takes it from the brook; but a dozen
miles of water have run through it without stick-
ing. *The Autocrat at the Breakfast Table.*

JANUARY SIXTH

Double vision with the eyes of the heart is
a dangerous physiological state, and may lead
to missteps and serious falls. *Elsie Venner.*

JANUARY SEVENTH

The maiden's ribbon or ruffle means a great
deal more for her than the judge's wig or the
priest's surplice. *The Guardian Angel.*

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



JANUARY EIGHTH

Romance! Was there ever a boarding-house in the world where the seemingly prosaic table had not a living fresco for its background, where you could see, if you had eyes, the smoke and fire of some upheaving sentiment, or the dreary craters of smouldering or burnt-out passions? You look on the black bombazine and high-necked decorum of your neighbor, and no more think of the real life that underlies this despoiled and dismantled womanhood than you think of a stone trilobite as having once been full of the juices and the nervous thrills of throbbing and self-conscious being.

The Professor.

JANUARY NINTH

One of my friends had a little marble statuette of Cupid in the parlor of his country-house,—bow, arrows, wings, and all complete. A visitor, indigenous to the region, looking pensively at the figure, asked the lady of the house “if that was a statoo of her deccased infant?” What a delicious, though somewhat voluminous biography, social, educational, and æsthetic, in that brief question!

The Autocrat.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



JANUARY TENTH

A very young and very pretty girl is sometimes quite charming in a costume which thinks of nothing less than of being attractive.

The Guardian Angel.

JANUARY ELEVENTH

There are women, and even girls, with whom it is of no use to talk. One might as well reason with a bee as to the form of his cell, or with an oriole as to the construction of his swinging nest, as try to stir these creatures from their own way of doing their own work.

The Professor.

JANUARY TWELFTH

It must be remembered that symmetry and elegance of features and figure, like perfectly formed crystals in the mineral world, are reached only by insuring a certain necessary repose to individuals and generations.

Elsie Venner.

JANUARY THIRTEENTH

Good feeling helps society to make liars of most of us,—not absolute liars, but such careless handlers of truth that its sharp corners get terribly rounded.

The Autocrat.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



JANUARY FOURTEENTH

No man or woman can appropriate beauty without paying for it,—in endowments, in fortune, in position, in self-surrender, or other valuable stock; and there are a great many who are too poor, too ordinary, too humble, too busy, too proud, to pay any of these prices for it.

Elsie Venner.

JANUARY FIFTEENTH

Provincialism has no *scale* of excellence in man or vegetable; it never knows a first rate article of either kind when it has it, and is constantly taking second and third rate ones for Nature's best.

The Autocrat.

JANUARY SIXTEENTH

Many young girls have a strange audacity blended with their instinctive delicacy. Even in physical daring many of them are a match for boys; whereas you will find few among mature women, and especially if they are mothers, who do not confess, and not unfrequently proclaim, their timidity.

The Professor.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



JANUARY SEVENTEENTH

True love leads many wandering souls into the better way. Nor is it rare to see those who started in company for the gates of pearl seated together on the banks that border the avenue to that other portal, gathering the roses for which it is so famous. *The Guardian Angel.*

JANUARY EIGHTEENTH

I wish I were half as good as many heathens have been. Dying for a principle seems to me a higher degree of virtue than scolding for it; and the history of heathen races is full of instances where men have laid down their lives for the love of their kind, of their country, of truth, nay, even for simple manhood's sake, or to show their obedience or fidelity.

The Professor.

JANUARY NINETEENTH

We may happen to be very dull folks, you and I, and probably are, unless there is some particular reason to suppose the contrary. But we get glimpses now and then of a sphere of spiritual possibilities, where we, dull as we are now, may sail in vast circles round the largest compass of earthly intelligences.

The Autocrat.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



JANUARY TWENTIETH

No Alpine needle, with its climbing spire,
Brings down for mortals the Promethean fire,
If careless Nature have forgot to frame
An altar worthy of the sacred flame.

Urania.

JANUARY TWENTY-FIRST

Little I ask; my wants are few;
I only wish a hut of stone,
(A very plain brown stone will do,)—
That I may call my own;—
And close at hand is such a one,
In yonder street that fronts the sun.

I care not much for gold or land;
Give me a mortgage here and there,—
Some good bank-stock,—some note of hand,
Or trifling railroad share;—
I only ask that Fortune send
A little more than I shall spend.

Jewels are baubles; 'tis a sin
To care for such unfruitful things;—
One good-sized diamond in a pin,—
Some, *not so large*, in rings,—
A ruby, and a pearl, or so,
Will do for me;—I laugh at show.

Contentment.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



JANUARY TWENTY-SECOND

The woman a man loves is always his own daughter, far more his daughter than the female children born to him by the common law of life. It is not the outside woman, who takes his name, that he loves: before her image has reached the center of his consciousness, it has passed through fifty many-layered nerve-strainers, been churned over by ten thousand pulse-beats, and reacted upon by millions of lateral impulses which bandy it about through the mental spaces as a reflection is sent back and forth in a saloon lined with mirrors. With this altered image of the women before him, his pre-existing ideal becomes blended. The object of his love is in part the offspring of her legal parents, but more of her lover's brain. *Elsie Venner.*

JANUARY TWENTY-THIRD

To brag little,—to show well,—to crow gently, if in luck,—to pay up, to own up, and to shut up, if beaten, are the virtues of a sporting man. *The Autocrat.*

JANUARY TWENTY-FOURTH

A great cause makes great souls, or reveals them to themselves. *The Guardian Angel.*

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



JANUARY TWENTY-FIFTH

Certificates are, for the most part, like ostrich eggs: the giver never knows what is hatched out of them. But once in a thousand times they act as curses are said to,—come home to roost. Give them often enough, until it gets to be a mechanical business, and, some day or other, you will get caught warranting somebody's ice not to melt in any climate, or somebody's razors to be safe in the hands of the youngest children. *Elsie Venner*

JANUARY TWENTY-SIXTH

Think not too meanly of thy low estate;
Thou hast a choice; to choose is to create!
Urania.

JANUARY TWENTY-SEVENTH

The hardest duty bravely performed soon becomes a habit, and tends in due time to transform itself into a pleasure. *Elsie Venner.*

JANUARY TWENTY-EIGHTH

No stranger can get a great many notes of torture out of a human soul; it takes one that knows it well,—parent, child, brother, sister, intimate. *The Autocrat.*

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



JANUARY TWENTY-NINTH

The narrow moments fit like Sunday shoes,
How vast the heap, how quickly must we choose;
A few small scraps from out his mountain mass
We snatch in haste, and let the vagrant pass.

Terpsichore.

JANUARY THIRTIETH

Can any man look round and see what Christian countries are now doing, and how they are governed, and what is the general condition of society, without seeing that Christianity is the flag under which the world sails, and not the rudder that steers its course?

The Professor.

JANUARY THIRTY-FIRST

Yes, dear departed, cherished days,
Could Memory's hand restore
Your morning light, your evening rays,
From Time's gray urn once more,—
Then might this restless heart be still,
This straining eye might close,
And Hope her fainting pinions fold,
While the fair phantoms rose.

Departed Days.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



FEBRUARY

FEBRUARY FIRST

Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,
As the swift seasons roll!
Leave thy low-vaulted past!
Let each new temple, nobler than the last,
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,
Till thou at length art free,
Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unrest-
ing sea! *The Chambered Nautilus.*

FEBRUARY SECOND

There is one disadvantage which the man of philosophical habits of mind suffers, as compared with the man of action. While he is taking an enlarged and rational view of the matter before him, he lets his chance slip through his fingers.

The Professor.

FEBRUARY THIRD

Conscience itself requires a conscience, or nothing can be more unscrupulous.

Elsie Venner.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



FEBRUARY FOURTH

For that great procession of the *unloved*, there is no depth of tenderness in my nature that Pity has not sounded. Somewhere,—somewhere,—love is in store for them,—the universe must not be allowed to fool them so cruelly.

The Autocrat.

FEBRUARY FIFTH

Love works very strange transformations in young women. Sometimes it leads them to try every mode of adding to their attractions,—their whole thought is how to be most lovely in the eyes they would fill so as to keep out all other images. Poor darlings! We smile at their little vanities, as if they were very trivial things; but Nature knows what she is about.

The Guardian Angel.

FEBRUARY SIXTH

The more wheels there are in a watch or a brain, the more trouble they are to take care of.

The Autocrat.

FEBRUARY SEVENTH

Put not your trust in money, but put your money in trust.

The Autocrat.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



FEBRUARY EIGHTH

Oftentimes, as I have lain swinging on the water, in the swell of the Chelsea ferry-boats, in that long, sharp-pointed, black cradle in which I love to let the great mother rock me, I have seen a tall ship glide by against the tide, as if drawn by some invisible tow-line, with a hundred strong arms pulling it. Her sails hung unfilled, her streamers were drooping, she had neither side-wheel nor stern-wheel; still she moved on, stately, in serene triumph, as if with her own life. But I knew that on the other side of the ship, hidden beneath the great hulk that swam so majestically, there was a little toiling steam-tug, with heart of fire and arms of iron, that was hugging it close, and dragging it bravely on; and I knew that, if the little steam-tug untwined her arms and left the tall ship, it would wallow and roll about, and drift hither and thither, and go off with the reflux tide no man knows whither. And so I have known more than one *genius*, high-decked, full-freighted, wide-sailed, gay-pennoned, that, but for the bare toiling arms, and brave, warm, beating heart of the faithful little wife, that dragged him on against all the tide of circumstance, would soon have gone down the stream and been heard of no more.

The Professor.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



FEBRUARY NINTH

There are those who hold the opinion that truth is only safe when diluted—about one-fifth to four-fifths lies—as the oxygen of the air is with its hydrogen. *The Guardian Angel.*

FEBRUARY TENTH

Even in common people, conceit has the virtue of making them cheerful; the man who thinks his wife, his baby, his house, his horse, his dog, and himself severally unequalled, is almost sure to be a good-humored person, though liable to be tedious at times. *The Autocrat.*

FEBRUARY ELEVENTH

Handsome hair, eyes, complexion, feature, form, hand, foot, pleasant voice, strength, grace, agility, intelligence,—how few there are that have not just enough of one at least of these gifts to show them that the good Mother, busy with her millions of children, has not quite forgotten them! *The Professor.*

FEBRUARY TWELFTH

Of all liars and false accusers, a sick conscience is the most inventive and indefatigable. *Elsie Venner.*

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



FEBRUARY THIRTEENTH

Youth fades ; love droops ; the leaves of friendship fall ;

A mother's secret hope outlives them all.

A Mother's Secret.

FEBRUARY FOURTEENTH

The world has a million roosts for a man, but only one nest.

The Autocrat.

FEBRUARY FIFTEENTH

A real woman does a great many things without knowing why she does them ; but these pattern machines mix up their intellects with everything they do, just like men. They can't help it, no doubt, but we can't help getting sick of them, either.

The Professor.

FEBRUARY SIXTEENTH

Love moves in an accelerating ratio ; and there comes a time when the progress of the passion escapes from all human formulæ, and brings two young hearts, which had been gradually drawing nearer and nearer together, into complete union, with a suddenness that puts an infinity between the moment when all is told and that which went just before.

The Guardian Angel.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



FEBRUARY SEVENTEENTH

Truth is tough. It will not break, like a bubble at a touch; nay, you may kick it about all day, like a football, and it will be round and full at evening. Does not Mr. Bryant say that Truth gets well if she is run over by a locomotive, while Error dies of lockjaw if she scratches her finger? I never heard that a mathematician was alarmed for the safety of a demonstrated proposition. I think, generally, that fear of open discussion implies feebleness of inward conviction, and great sensitiveness to the expression of individual opinion is a mark of weakness.

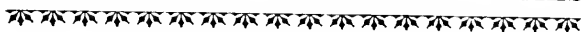
The Professor.

FEBRUARY EIGHTEENTH

Nature gets us out of youth into manhood, as sailors are hurried on board of vessels,—in a state of intoxication. We are hustled into maturity reeling with our passions and imaginations, and we have drifted far away from port before we awake out of our illusions. But to carry us out of maturity into old age, without our knowing where we are going, she drugs us with strong opiates, and so we stagger along with wide open eyes that see nothing until snow enough has fallen on our heads to rouse our comatose brains out of their stupid trances.

The Autocrat.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



FEBRUARY NINETEENTH

No fear lest praise should make us proud!

We know how cheaply that is won;

The idle homage of the crowd

Is proof of tasks as idly done.

Saint Anthony.

FEBRUARY TWENTIETH

She appeared to be thirty-five years old, more or less, and looked not badly for that stage of youth, though, of course, she might have been handsomer at twenty, as is often the case with women.

The Guardian Angel.

FEBRUARY TWENTY-FIRST

Consciousness of unquestioned position makes people gracious in proper measure to all; but if a woman put on airs with her real equals, she has something about herself or her family she is ashamed of, or ought to be.

The Autocrat.

FEBRUARY TWENTY-SECOND

As the Model of all the Virtues is about to leave us, I find myself wondering what is the reason we are not all very sorry. Surely we all like good persons. She is a good person. Therefore we like her.—Only we don't.

The Professor.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



FEBRUARY TWENTY-THIRD

A certain involuntary adjustment assimilates us, you may also observe, to that upon which we look. Roses redden the cheeks of her who stoops to gather them, and buttercups turn little people's chins yellow. When we look at a vast landscape, our chests expand as if we would enlarge to fill it. When we examine a minute object, we naturally contract, not only our foreheads, but all our dimensions. If I see two men wrestling, I wrestle too, with my limbs and features. When a country-fellow comes upon the stage, you will see twenty faces in the boxes putting on the bumpkin expression. There is no need of multiplying instances to reach this generalization; every person and thing we look upon puts its special mark upon us. If this is repeated often enough, we get a permanent resemblance to it, or at least a fixed aspect which we took from it. Husband and wife come to look alike at last, as has often been noticed.

The Professor.

FEBRUARY TWENTY-FOURTH

A young man, using large endowments wisely and fortunately, may put himself on a level with the highest in the land in ten brilliant years of spirited, unflagging labor. *Elsie Venner.*

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



FEBRUARY TWENTY-FIFTH

Every person's feelings have a front-door and a side-door by which they may be entered. The front-door is on the street. Some keep it always open; some keep it latched; some, locked; some, bolted,—with a chain that will let you peep in, but not get in; and some nail it up, so that nothing can pass its threshold. This front-door leads into a passage which opens into an ante-room, and this into the interior apartments. The side-door opens at once into the sacred chambers.

There is almost always at least one key to this side-door. This is carried for years hidden in a mother's bosom. Fathers, brothers, sisters, and friends, often, but by no means so universally, have duplicates of it. The wedding-ring conveys a right to one; alas, if none is given with it!

The Autocrat.

FEBRUARY TWENTY-SIXTH

The two women looked each other in the eyes with subtle interchange of intelligence, such as belongs to their sex in virtue of its specialty. Talk without words is half their conversation, just as it is all the conversation of dumb animals. Only the dull senses of men are dead to it as to the music of the spheres.

The Guardian Angel.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



FEBRUARY TWENTY-SEVENTH

All who have observed much are aware that some men, who have seen a great deal of life in its less chastened aspects and are anything but modest, will blush often and easily, while there are delicate and sensitive women who can faint, or go into fits, if necessary, but are very rarely seen to betray their feelings in their cheeks, even when their expression shows that their inmost soul is blushing scarlet. *Elsie Venner.*

FEBRUARY TWENTY-EIGHTH

If the sense of the ridiculous is one side of an impressible nature, it is very well; but if that is all there is in a man, he had better have been an ape at once, and so have stood at the head of his profession. Laughter and tears are meant to turn the wheels of the same machinery of sensibility; one is wind-power, and the other water-power; that is all. *The Autocrat.*

FEBRUARY TWENTY-NINTH

Use well the freedom which thy Master gave,
(Think'st thou that Heaven can tolerate a
slave?)

And He who made thee to be just and true
Will bless thee, love thee,—aye, respect thee too!

Urania.



MARCH

MARCH FIRST

The sunbeams, lost for half a year,
 Slant through my pane their morning rays;
For dry Northwesters cold and clear,
 The East blows in its thin blue haze.

And first the snowdrop's bells are seen,
 Then close against the sheltering wall
The tulip's horn of dusky green,
 The peony's dark unfolding ball.

The golden-chaliced crocus burns;
 The long narcissus-blades appear;
The cone-beaked hyacinth returns,
 And lights her blue-flamed chandelier.

The willow's whistling lashes, wrung
 By the wild winds of gusty March,
With sallow leaflets lightly strung,
 Are swaying by the tufted larch.
Spring has Come.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



MARCH SECOND

When the eyes meet and search each other, it is the uncovering of the blanched stem through which the whole life runs, but which has never taken color or form from the sunlight.

Elsie Venner.

MARCH THIRD

What a man wants to do, in talking with a stranger, is to get and to give as much of the best and most real life that belongs to the two talkers as the time will let him. Life is short, and conversation apt to run to mere words.

The Professor.

MARCH FOURTH

Nothing is so common-place as to wish to be remarkable. Fame usually comes to those who are thinking about something else,—very rarely to those who say to themselves, “Go to, now, let us be a celebrated individual!” *The Autocrat.*

MARCH FIFTH

Where go the poet's lines?—

Answer, ye evening tapers!

Ye auburn locks, ye golden curls,

Speak from your folded papers!

The Poet's Lot.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



MARCH SIXTH

The average intellect of five hundred persons, taken as they come, is not very high. It may be sound and safe, so far as it goes, but it is not very rapid or profound. *The Autocrat.*

MARCH SEVENTH

Love shuts itself up in sympathy like a knife-blade in its handle, and opens as easily.
The Guardian Angel.

MARCH EIGHTH

Beliefs must be lived in for a good while, before they accommodate themselves to the soul's wants, and wear loose enough to be comfortable.
Elsie Venner.

MARCH NINTH

In choosing your clergyman, other things being equal, prefer the one of a wholesome and cheerful habit of mind and body. If you can get along with people who carry a certificate in their faces that their goodness is so great as to make them very miserable, your children cannot. And whatever offends one of these little ones, cannot be right in the eyes of Him Who loved them so well. *The Professor.*

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



MARCH TENTH

The miserable routinists who keep repeating invidiously Cowper's "God made the country and man made the town," as if the town were a place to kill the race in, do not know what they are talking about. Is the dark and damp cavern where a ragged beggar hides himself better than a town-mansion which fronts the sunshine and backs on its own shadow? God made the cavern and man made the house! What then?

Elsie Venner.

MARCH ELEVENTH

Don't you know how hard it is for some people to get out of a room after their visit is really over? They want to be off, and you want to have them off, but they don't know how to manage it. One would think they had been built in your parlor or study, and were waiting to be launched.

The Autocrat.

MARCH TWELFTH

I have often observed that vulgar persons, and public audiences of inferior collective intelligence, have this in common: the least thing draws off their minds when you are speaking to them.

The Professor.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



MARCH THIRTEENTH

An overworked woman is always a sad sight, sadder a great deal than an overworked man, because she is so much more fertile in capacities of suffering than a man. *Elsie Venner.*

MARCH FOURTEENTH

I would have a woman as true as Death. At the first real lie which works from the heart outward, she should be tenderly chloroformed into a better world, where she can have an angel for a governess, and feed on strange fruits which will make her all over again, even to her bones and marrow. *The Autocrat.*

MARCH FIFTEENTH

A young fellow, born of good stock, in one of the more thoroughly civilized portions of these United States of America, bred in good principles, inheriting a social position which makes him at his ease everywhere, means sufficient to educate him thoroughly without taking away the stimulus to vigorous exertion, and with a good opening in some honorable path of labor, is the finest sight our private satellite has had the opportunity of inspecting on the planet to which she belongs. *The Professor.*

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



MARCH SIXTEENTH

Sin has many tools, but a lie is the handle
which fits them all. *The Autocrat.*

MARCH SEVENTEENTH

I find that there is a very prevalent opinion among the dwellers on the shores of Sir Isaac Newton's Ocean of Truth, that salt fish, which have been taken from it a good while ago, split open, cured, and dried, are the only proper and allowable food for reasonable people. I maintain, on the other hand, that there are a number of live fish still swimming in it, and that every one of us has a right to see if he cannot catch some of them. Sometimes I please myself with the idea that I have landed an actual living fish, small, perhaps, but with rosy gills and silvery scales. Then I find the consumers of nothing but the salted and dried article insist that it is poisonous, simply because it is alive, and cry out to people not to touch it. I have not found, however, that people mind them much.

The Professor.

MARCH EIGHTEENTH

The best thought, like the most perfect digestion, is done unconsciously.

The Guardian Angel.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



MARCH NINETEENTH

Don't flatter yourselves that friendship authorizes you to say disagreeable things to your intimates. On the contrary, the nearer you come into relation with a person, the more necessary do tact and courtesy become. Except in cases of necessity, which are rare, leave your friend to learn unpleasant truths from his enemies; they are ready enough to tell them. Good-breeding *never* forgets that *amour-propre* is universal.

The Autocrat.

MARCH TWENTIETH

Every event that a man would master must be mounted on the run, and no man ever caught the reins of a thought except as it galloped by him.

The Professor.

MARCH TWENTY-FIRST

It is well that young persons cannot read the fatal oracles of Nature. Blind impulse is her highest wisdom, after all. We make our great jump, and then she takes the bandage off our eyes. That is the way the broad sea-level of average is maintained, and the physiological democracy is enabled to fight against the principle of selection which would disinherit all the weaker children.

Elsie Venner.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



MARCH TWENTY-SECOND

Winter is past; the heart of Nature warms
Beneath the wrecks of unresisted storms;
Doubtful at first, suspected more than seen,
The southern slopes are fringed with tender
 green;
On sheltered banks, beneath the dripping eaves,
Spring's earliest nurslings spread their glowing
 leaves,
Bright with the hues from wider pictures won,
White, azure, golden,—drift, or sky, or sun;—
The snowdrop, bearing on her patient breast
The frozen trophy torn from winter's crest;
The violet, gazing on the arch of blue
Till her own iris wears its deepened hue;
The spendthrift crocus, bursting through the
 mould. *Astræa.*

MARCH TWENTY-THIRD

By every hill whose stately pines
 Wave their dark arms above
The home where some fair being shines,
 To warm the wilds with love,
From barest rock to bleakest shore
 Where farthest sail unfurls,
That stars and stripes are streaming o'er,—
 God bless our Yankee girls!
 Our Yankee Girls.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



MARCH TWENTY-FOURTH

He had a good deal in him of what he used to call the Old Man, which, as he confessed, he had never succeeded in putting off,—meaning thereby certain qualities belonging to humanity, as much as the natural gifts of the dumb creatures belong to them, and tending to make a man beloved by his weak and erring fellow-mortals.

The Guardian Angel.

MARCH TWENTY-FIFTH

Every word we speak is the medal of a dead thought or feeling, struck in the die of human experience, worn smooth by innumerable contacts, and always transferred warm from one to another.

Elsie Venner.

MARCH TWENTY-SIXTH

Facts always yield the place of honor in conversation to thoughts about facts.

The Autocrat.

MARCH TWENTY-SEVENTH

The real religion of the world comes from women much more than from men—from mothers most of all, who carry the key of our souls in their bosoms.

The Professor.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



MARCH TWENTY-EIGHTH

Habit is the approximation of the animal system to the organic. It is a confession of failure in the highest function of being, which involves a perpetual self-determination, in full view of all existing circumstances. But habit, you see, is an action in present circumstances from past motives. It is substituting a *vis a tergo* for the evolution of living force. *The Professor.*

MARCH TWENTY-NINTH

'Tis but the fool that loves excess;—hast thou
a drunken soul?
Thy bane is in thy shallow skull, not in my
silver bowl! *On Lending a Punch-Bowl.*

MARCH THIRTIETH

You never need think you can turn over any old falsehood without a terrible squirming and scattering of the horrid little population that dwells under it. *The Autocrat.*

MARCH THIRTY-FIRST

The recollection of a deep and true affection is rather a divine nourishment for a life to grow strong upon than a poison to destroy it.
Elsie Venner.

APRIL

APRIL FIRST

I hear the whispering voice of Spring,
The thrush's trill, the cat-bird's cry,
Like some poor bird with prisoned wing
That sits and sings, but longs to fly.

O for one spot of living green,—
One little spot where leaves can grow,—
To love unblamed, to walk unseen,
To dream above, to sleep below!
Spring has Come.

APRIL SECOND

The opinions of relatives as to a man's powers are very commonly of little value; not merely because they sometimes overrate their own flesh and blood, as some may suppose; on the contrary, they are quite as likely to under-rate those whom they have grown into the habit of considering like themselves.

The Autocrat.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



APRIL THIRD

There are no better maxims for ladies who give tea-parties than these: Cream is thicker than water. Large heart never loved little cream-pot.

Elsie Venner.

APRIL FOURTH

The brain is the palest of all the internal organs, and the heart the reddest. Whatever comes from the brain carries the hue of the place it came from, and whatever comes from the heart carries the heat and color of its birth-place.

The Professor.

APRIL FIFTH

If a man really loves a woman, of course he wouldn't marry her for the world, if he were not quite sure that he was the best person she could by any possibility marry. *The Autocrat.*

APRIL SIXTH

How patient Nature smiles at Fame!

The weeds, that strewed the victor's way,
Feed on his dust to shroud his name,

Green where his proudest towers decay.

A Roman Aqueduct.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



APRIL SEVENTH

To know whether a minister, young or still in flower, is in safe or dangerous paths, there are two psychometers. The first is the black broadcloth forming the knees of his pantaloons; the second, the patch of carpet before his mirror. If the first is unworn and the second is frayed and threadbare, pray for him. If the first is worn and shiny, while the second keeps its pattern and texture, get him to pray for you.

The Guardian Angel.

APRIL EIGHTH

A portrait is apt to be a surprise to us. The artist looks only from without. He sees us, too, with a hundred aspects on our faces we are never likely to see. No genuine expression can be studied by the subject of it in the looking-glass.

The Professor.

APRIL NINTH

When one of us who has been led by native vanity or senseless flattery to think himself or herself possessed of talent arrives at the full and final conclusion that he or she is really dull, it is one of the most tranquilizing and blessed convictions that can enter a mortal's mind.

The Autocrat.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



APRIL TENTH

No, my friends, I go (always, other things being equal) for the man that inherits family traditions and the cumulative humanities of at least four or five generations. Above all things, as a child, he should have tumbled about in a library. All men are afraid of books, that have not handled them from infancy. *The Autocrat.*

APRIL ELEVENTH

Whatever may be the cause, it is well known that the announcement at any private rural entertainment that there is to be ice cream produces an immediate and profound impression. It may be remarked, as aiding this impression, that exaggerated ideas prevail as to the dangerous effects this congealed food may produce on persons not in the most robust health.

Elsie Venner.

APRIL TWELFTH

There is nothing earthly that lasts so well, on the whole, as money. A man's learning dies with him; even his virtues fade out of remembrance; but the dividends on the stocks he bequeaths to his children live and keep his memory green.

The Professor.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



APRIL THIRTEENTH

. . . The green earth, beneath the zephyr's
 wing,
Wears on her breast the varnished buds of
 Spring,
When the loosed current, as its folds uncoil,
Slides in the channels of the mellowed soil;
When the young hyacinth returns to seek
The air and sunshine with her emerald beak;
When the light snowdrops, starting from their
 cells,
Hang each pagoda with its silver bells;
When the frail willow twines her trailing bow
With pallid leaves that sweep the soil below;
When the broad elm, sole empress of the plain,
Whose circling shadow speaks a century's reign,
Wreathes in the clouds her regal diadem,—
A forest waving on a single stem.

Poetry: A Metrical Essay.

APRIL FOURTEENTH

These beauties that grow and ripen against
the city walls, these young fellows with cheeks
like peaches and young girls with cheeks like
nectarines, show that the most perfect forms of
artificial life can do as much for the human
product as garden-culture for strawberries and
blackberries.

Elsie Venner.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



APRIL FIFTEENTH

There must be other things besides aërolites that wander from their own spheres to ours; and when we speak of celestial sweetness or beauty, we may be nearer the literal truth than we dream. *The Autocrat.*

APRIL SIXTEENTH

At a certain period of life, say from fifty to sixty and upward, the *grand*-paternal instinct awakens in bachelors, the rhythms of Nature reaching them in spite of her defeated intentions; so that when they marry late they love their autumn child with a twofold affection,—father's and grandfather's both in one.

The Guardian Angel.

APRIL SEVENTEENTH

A little clear perfection, undiluted with human weakness, goes a great way.

The Professor.

APRIL EIGHTEENTH

There is no galvanism in kiss-your-brother; it is copper against copper; but alien bloods develop strange currents, when they flow close to each other, with only the films that cover lip and cheek between them. *Elsie Venner.*

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



APRIL NINETEENTH

A woman who does not carry a halo of good feeling and desire to make everybody about contented with her wherever she goes,—an atmosphere of grace, mercy, and peace, of at least six feet radius, which wraps every human being upon whom she voluntarily bestows her presence, and so flatters him with the comfortable thought that she is rather glad he is alive than otherwise, isn't worth the trouble of talking to, *as a woman*; she may do well enough to hold discussions with. *The Professor.*

APRIL TWENTIETH

Where there is one man who squints with his eyes, there are a dozen who squint with their brains. It is an infirmity in the eyes, making the two unequal in power, that makes men squint. Just so is it an inequality in the two halves of the brain that makes some men idiots and others rascals. *The Guardian Angel.*

APRIL TWENTY-FIRST

A hat which has been *popped*, or exploded by being sat down upon, is never itself again afterwards. It is a favorite illusion of sanguine natures to believe the contrary. *The Autocrat.*

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



APRIL TWENTY-SECOND

The spiritual standard of different classes I would reckon thus:—1. The comfortably rich. 2. The decently comfortable. 3. The very rich, who are apt to be irreligious. 4. The very poor, who are apt to be immoral.

The Professor.

APRIL TWENTY-THIRD

Beware of making your moral staple consist of the negative virtues. It is good to abstain, and teach others to abstain, from all that is sinful or hurtful. But making a business of it leads to emaciation of character, unless one feeds largely also on the more nutritious diet of active sympathetic benevolence.

The Autocrat.

APRIL TWENTY-FOURTH

People, young or old, are wonderfully different, if we contrast extremes in pairs. They approach much nearer, if we take them in groups of twenty. Take two hundred as they come, without choosing, and you get the gamut of human character in both so completely that you strike many chords in each which shall be in perfect unison with corresponding ones in the other.

Elsie Venner.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



APRIL TWENTY-FIFTH

The elms have robed their slender spray
With full-blown flower and embryo leaf;
Wide o'er the clasping arch of day
Soars like a cloud their hoary chief.

See the proud tulip's flaunting cup,
That flames in glory for an hour,—
Behold it withering,—then look up,—
How meek the forest-monarch's flower!—

When wake the violets, Winter dies;
When sprout the elm-buds, Spring is near;
When lilacs blossom, Summer cries,
“Bud, little roses! Spring is here!”
Spring has Come.

APRIL TWENTY-SIXTH

Every real thought on every real subject
knocks the wind out of somebody or other. As
soon as his breath comes back, he very prob-
ably begins to expend it in hard words.

The Autocrat.

APRIL TWENTY-SEVENTH

Do you know the pathos there is in the eyes
of unsought women, oppressed with the burden
of an inner life unshared? *Elsie Venner.*

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



APRIL TWENTY-EIGHTH

Once more the pulse of Nature glows
With faster throb and fresher fire,
While music round her pathway flows
Like echoes from a hidden lyre.

And is there none with me to share
The glories of the earth and sky?
The eagle through the pathless air
Is followed by one burning eye.

From a Bachelor's Journal.

APRIL TWENTY-NINTH

The heart makes the theologian. Every race, every civilization, either has a new revelation of its own or a new interpretation of an old one. Democratic America has a different humanity from feudal Europe, and so must have a new divinity.

The Professor.

APRIL THIRTIETH

At last young April, ever frail and fair,
Woody by her playmate with the golden hair,
Chased to the margin of receding floods
O'er the soft meadows starred with opening
buds,

In tears and blushes sighs herself away,
And hides her cheek beneath the flowers of May.

Astræa.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



MAY

MAY FIRST

Look at Nature. She never wearies of saying over her floral paternoster. In the crevices of Cyclopean walls,—in the dust where men lie, dust also,—on the mounds that bury huge cities, the Birs Nimroud and the Babel-heap,—still that same sweet prayer and benediction. The Amen! of Nature is always a flower.

The Autocrat.

MAY SECOND

The windows blush with fresh bouquets,
Cut with the May-dew on their lips;
The radish all its bloom displays,
Pink as Aurora's finger-tips.

Nor less the flood of light that showers
On beauty's changed corolla-shades,—
The walks are gay as bridal bowers
With rows of many-petalled maids.

Spring has Come.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



MAY THIRD

The red heart sends all its instincts up to the white brain to be analyzed, chilled, blanched, and so become pure reason, which is just exactly what we do not want of woman as woman. The current should run the other way. The nice, calm, cold thought, which in women shapes itself so rapidly that they hardly know it as thought, should always travel to the lips *viâ* the heart. It does so in those women whom all love and admire.

The Professor.

MAY FOURTH

When those who parted as children meet as man and woman, there is always a renewal of that early experience which followed the taste of the forbidden fruit,—a natural blush of consciousness, not without its charm.

Elsie Venner.

MAY FIFTH

Oh, what are the prizes we perish to win
To the first little “shiner” we caught with a pin!
No soil upon earth is so dear to our eyes
As the soil we first stirred in terrestrial pies!

At the Berkshire Festival.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



MAY SIXTH

Of a hundred people of each of the different leading religious sects, about the same proportion will be safe and pleasant persons to deal and to live with. *The Professor.*

MAY SEVENTH

The beauty of good breeding is that it adjusts itself to all relations without effort, true to itself always, however the manners of those around it may change. *Elsie Venner.*

MAY EIGHTH

Easy-crying widows take new husbands soonest; there is nothing like wet weather for transplanting. *The Guardian Angel.*

MAY NINTH

All generous minds have a horror of what are commonly called "facts." They are the brute beasts of the intellectual domain. Who does not know fellows that always have an ill-conditioned fact or two that they lead after them into decent company like so many bulldogs, ready to let them slip at every ingenious suggestion, or convenient generalization, or pleasant fancy? *The Autocrat.*

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



MAY TENTH

Sharp business habits, a lean soil, independence, enterprise, and east winds, are not the best things for the larynx. Still, you hear noble voices among us,—I have known families famous for them,—but ask the first person you meet a question, and ten to one there is a hard, sharp, metallic, matter-of-business clink in the accents of the answer, that produces the effect of one of those bells which small trades-people connect with their shop-doors, and which spring upon your ear with such vivacity, as you enter, that your first impulse is to retire at once from the precincts. *The Autocrat.*

MAY ELEVENTH

I sometimes think women have a sixth sense, which tells them that others, whom they cannot see or hear, are in suffering. *The Professor.*

MAY TWELFTH

Men who see into their neighbors are very apt to be contemptuous; but men who see through them find something lying behind every human soul which it is not for them to sit in judgment on, or to attempt to sneer out of the order of God's manifold universe. *Elsie Venner.*

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



MAY THIRTEENTH

Women are twice as religious as men ; all the world knows that. Whether they are any *better*, in the eyes of Absolute Justice, might be questioned ; for the additional religious element supplied by sex hardly seems to be a matter of praise or blame. But in all common aspects they are so much above us that we get most of our religion from them,—from their teachings, from their example,—above all, from their pure affections.

The Professor.

MAY FOURTEENTH

You think yourself a very fastidious young man, my friend ; but there are probably at least five thousand young women in these United States, any one of whom you would certainly marry, if you were thrown much in her company, and nobody more attractive were near, and she had no objection.

Elsie Venner,

MAY FIFTEENTH

She who nips off the end of a brittle courtesy, as one breaks the tip of an icicle, to bestow upon these whom she ought cordially and kindly to recognize, proclaims the fact that she comes not merely of low blood, but of bad blood.

The Autocrat.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



MAY SIXTEENTH

If the Devil could only appear in church by attorney, and make the best statement that the facts would bear him out in doing on behalf of his special virtues (what we commonly call vices), the influence of good teachers would be much greater than it is. For the arguments by which the Devil prevails are precisely the ones that the Devil-queller most rarely answers.

The Autocrat.

MAY SEVENTEENTH

Nature took him into her confidence. She loves the men of science well, and tells them all her family secrets,—who is the father of this or that member of the group, who is brother, sister, cousin, and so on, through all the circle of relationship. But there are others to whom she tells her *dreams*; not what species or genus her lily belongs to, but what vague thought it has when it dresses in white, or what memory of its birthplace that is which we call its fragrance.

The Guardian Angel.

MAY EIGHTEENTH

What a miserable thing it is to be poor!

Elsie Venner.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



MAY NINETEENTH

The apron-strings of an American mother are made of india-rubber. Her boy belongs where he is wanted.

The Professor.

MAY TWENTIETH

The woods are all alive to one who walks through them with his mind in an excited state, and his eyes and ears wide open. The trees are always talking, not merely whispering with their leaves (for every tree talks to itself in that way, even when it stands alone in the middle of a pasture), but grating their boughs against one another, as old, horn-handed farmers press their dry, rustling palms together, dropping a nut or a leaf or a twig, clicking to the tap of a woodpecker, or rustling as a squirrel flashes along a branch.

Elsie Venner.

MAY TWENTY-FIRST

She did not announce any opinion; but she made a sound which the books write *humph!* but which real folks make with closed lips, thus: *m'!*, implying that there is a good deal which might be said, and all the vocal organs want to have a chance at it, if there is to be any talking.

The Guardian Angel.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



MAY TWENTY-SECOND

I can't help remembering that the world's great men have not commonly been great scholars, nor its great scholars great men.

The Autocrat.

MAY TWENTY-THIRD

The unbeautiful get many more lovers than the beauties; only, as there are more of them, their lovers are spread thinner and do not make so much show.

Elsie Venner.

MAY TWENTY-FOURTH

The man whose opinions are not attacked is beneath contempt.

The Professor.

MAY TWENTY-FIFTH

There is no possible success without some opposition as a fulcrum: force is always aggressive, and crowds something or other, if it does not hit or trample on it. *The Guardian Angel.*

MAY TWENTY-SIXTH

I find the great thing in this world is not so much where we stand, as in what direction we are moving.

The Autocrat.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



MAY TWENTY-SEVENTH

I love sweet features ; I will own
That I should like myself
To see my portrait on a wall,
Or bust upon a shelf ;
But nature sometimes makes one up
Of such sad odds and ends,
It really might be quite as well
Hushed up among one's friends !
To the Portrait of "A Lady."

MAY TWENTY-EIGHTH

If jealousies that gnaw men's hearts out of their bodies,—if pangs that waste men to shadows and drive them into raving madness or moping melancholy,—if assassination and suicide are dreadful possibilities, then there is always something frightful about a lovely young woman.
The Autocrat.

MAY TWENTY-NINTH

The old political wire-pullers never go near the man they want to gain, if they can help it ; they find out who his intimates and managers are, and work through them. Always handle any positively electrical body, whether it is charged with passion or power, with some non-conductor between you and it, not with naked hands.
Elsie Venner.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



MAY THIRTIETH

Dowdyism is clearly an expression of imperfect vitality. The highest fashion is intensely alive, not alive necessarily to the truest and best things, but with its blood tingling, as it were, in all its extremities and to the farthest point of its surface, so that the feather in its bonnet is as fresh as the crest of a fighting-cock, and the rosette on its slipper as clean-cut and *pimpant* (pronounce it English fashion,—it is a good word) as a dahlia. As a general rule, that society where flattery is acted is much more agreeable than that where it is spoken. Don't you see why? Attention and deference don't require you to make fine speeches expressing your sense of unworthiness (lies) and returning all the compliments paid you. This is one reason.

The Professor.

MAY THIRTY-FIRST

Grieve, as thou must, o'er history's reeking
page;

Blush for the wrongs that stain thy happier
age;

Strive with the wanderer from the better path,
Bearing thy message meekly, not in wrath;

Weep for the frail that err, the weak that fall,
Have thine own faith,—but hope and pray for
all!

Urania.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



JUNE

JUNE FIRST

Every sense and faculty was awake to the manifold delicious, mysterious impressions of that wonderful June night. The stars were shining between the tall trees, as if all the jewels of heaven had been set in one belt of midnight sky. The voices of the wind, as they sighed through the pines, seemed like the breath of a sleeping child, and then, as they lisped from the soft, tender leaves of beeches and maples, like the half-articulate whisper of the mother hushing all the intrusive sounds that might awaken it.

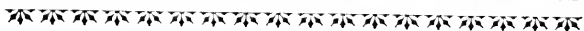
The Guardian Angel.

JUNE SECOND

The lily shrinks, and the rose turns pale,
When they feel its breath in the summer gale,
And the tulip curls its leaves in pride,
And the blue-eyed violet starts aside;
But the lily may flaunt, and the tulip stare,
For what does the honest toadstool care?

The Toadstool.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



JUNE THIRD

It was now the season of singing-birds, and the woods were haunted with mysterious, tender music. The voices of the birds which love the deeper shades of the forest are sadder than those of the open fields: these are the nuns that have taken the veil, the hermits that have hidden themselves away from the world to tell their griefs.

Elsie Venner.

JUNE FOURTH

The sound of a kiss is not so loud as that of a cannon, but its echo lasts a deal longer.

The Professor.

JUNE FIFTH

Women love the conquering party,—it is the way of their sex.

The Guardian Angel.

JUNE SIXTH

Your self-made man, whittled into shape with his own jack-knife, deserves more credit, if that is all, than the regular engine-turned article, shaped by the most approved pattern, and French-polished by society and travel. But as to saying that one is every way the equal of the other, that is another matter.

The Autocrat.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



JUNE SEVENTH

Billionism, or even millionism, must be a blessed kind of state, with health and clear conscience and good looks,—but most blessed in this, that it takes off all the mean cares which give people the three wrinkles between the eyebrows, and leaves them free to have a good time and make others have a good time, all the way along from the charity that tips up unexpected loads of wood before widows' houses, and leaves foundling turkeys upon poor men's doorsteps, and sets lean clergymen crying at the sight of anonymous fifty-dollar bills, to the taste which orders a perfect banquet in such sweet accord with every sense that everybody's nature flowers out full-blown in its golden-glowing, fragrant atmosphere.

Elsie Venner.

JUNE EIGHTH

The whole essence of true gentle-breeding (one does not like to say gentility) lies in the wish and the art to be agreeable. Good-breeding is *Surface-Christianity*. Every look, movement, tone, expression, subject of discourse, that may give pain to another is habitually excluded from conversational intercourse. This is the reason why rich people are apt to be so much more agreeable than others.

The Professor.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



JUNE NINTH

Men is men and gals is gals. I wouldn't trust no man, not ef he was much under a hundred year old, and as for a gal ——!

The Guardian Angel.

JUNE TENTH

We must have a weak spot or two in a character before we can love it much. People that do not laugh or cry, or take more of anything than is good for them, or use anything but dictionary-words, are admirable subjects for biographies. But we don't always care most for those flat-pattern flowers that press best in the herbarium.

The Professor.

JUNE ELEVENTH

Remember that Nature makes every man love all women, and trusts the trivial matter of special choice to the commonest accident.

Elsie Venner.

JUNE TWELFTH

How curious it is that we always consider solemnity and the absence of all gay surprises and encounter of wits as essential to the idea of the future life of those whom we thus deprive of half their faculties and then call *blessed*!

The Autocrat.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES

JUNE THIRTEENTH

Many a woman rejects a man because he is in love with her, and accepts another because he is not. The first is thinking too much of himself and his emotions,—the other is making a study of her and her friends, and learns what ropes to pull. *The Guardian Angel.*

JUNE FOURTEENTH

Unpretending mediocrity is good, and genius is glorious; but a weak flavor of genius in an essentially common person is detestable. It spoils the grand neutrality of a common-place character, as the rinsings of an unwashed wine-glass spoil a draught of fair water.

The Autocrat.

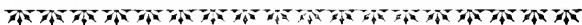
JUNE FIFTEENTH

I hope I love good men and women; I know that they never speak a word to me, even if it be of question or blame, that I do not take pleasantly, if it is expressed with a reasonable amount of human kindness. *The Professor.*

JUNE SIXTEENTH

All our other features were made for us; but a man makes his own mouth. *Elsie Venner.*

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



JUNE SEVENTEENTH

There are about as many twins in the births of thought as of children. For the first time in your lives you learn some fact or come across some idea. Within an hour, a day, a week, that same fact or idea strikes you from another quarter. It seems as if it had passed into space and bounded back upon you as an echo from the blank wall that shuts in the world of thought. Yet no connection exists. *The Professor.*

JUNE EIGHTEENTH

Little localized powers, and little narrow streaks of specialized knowledge, are things men are very apt to be conceited about. Nature is very wise; but for this encouraging principle how many small talents and little accomplishments would be neglected! Talk about conceit as much as you like, it is to human character what salt is to the ocean; it keeps it sweet, and renders it endurable. Say rather it is like the natural unguent of the sea-fowl's plumage, which enables him to shed the rain that falls on him and the wave in which he dips. When one has had *all* conceit taken out of him, when he has lost *all* his illusions, his feathers will soon soak through, and he will fly no more.

The Autocrat.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



JUNE NINETEENTH

Better too few words from the woman we love than too many: while she is silent, Nature is working for her; while she talks, she is working for herself. Love is sparingly soluble in the words of men; therefore they speak much of it; but one syllable of woman's speech can dissolve more of it than a man's heart can hold.

The Autocrat.

JUNE TWENTIETH

A man of sense,—that is, a man who knows perfectly well that a cool head is worth a dozen warm hearts in carrying the fortress of a woman's affections, who knows that men are rejected by women every day because they do not, and therefore can study the arts of pleasing,—a man of sense, when he finds he has established his second parallel too soon, retires quietly to his first, and begins working on his covered ways again.

Elsie Venner.

JUNE TWENTY-FIRST

Religion and government appear to me the two subjects which, of all others, should belong to the common talk of people who enjoy the blessings of freedom.

The Professor.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



JUNE TWENTY-SECOND

It is by no means certain that our individual personality is the single inhabitant of these our corporeal frames. . . . Thus, at one moment we detect the look, at another the tone of voice, at another the characteristic movement of this or that ancestor, in our relations or others. There are times when our friends do not act like themselves, but apparently in obedience to some other law than that of their own proper nature. We all do things both awake and asleep which surprise us. Perhaps we have cotenants in this house we live in. *The Guardian Angel.*

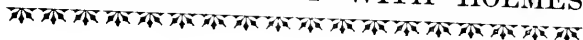
JUNE TWENTY-THIRD

If we should compare a young girl's *man-as-she-thinks-him* with a forty-summured matron's *man-as-she-finds-him*, I have my doubts as to whether the second would be a facsimile of the first in most cases. *The Professor.*

JUNE TWENTY-FOURTH

Fit the same intellect to a man and it is a bow-string,—to a woman and it is a harp-string. She is vibratile and resonant all over, so she stirs with slighter musical tremblings of the air about her. *The Autocrat.*

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



JUNE TWENTY-FIFTH

I don't know anything sweeter than this leaking in of Nature through all the cracks in the walls and floors of cities. You heap up a million tons of hewn rocks on a square mile or two of earth which was green once. The trees look down from the hill-sides and ask each other, as they stand on tiptoe,—“What are these people about?” And the small herbs at their feet look up and whisper back,—“We will go and see.” So the small herbs pack themselves up in the least possible bundles, and wait until the wind steals to them at night and whispers,—“Come with me.” Then they go softly with it into the great city,—one to a cleft in the pavement, one to a spout on the roof, one to a seam in the marbles over a rich gentleman's bones, and one to the grave without a stone where nothing but a man is buried,—and there they grow, looking down on the generations of men from mouldy roofs, looking up from between the less-trodden pavements, looking out through iron cemetery-railings.

The Autocrat.

JUNE TWENTY-SIXTH

Don't believe no wrong of nobody, not till y' must.

The Guardian Angel

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



JUNE TWENTY-SEVENTH

The education of our community to all that is beautiful is flowing in mainly through its women.
Elsie Venner.

JUNE TWENTY-EIGHTH

The physician in the Arabian Nights made his patient play at ball with a bat, the hollow handle of which contained drugs of marvelous efficacy. Whether it was the drugs that made the sick man get well, or the exercise, is not of so much consequence as the fact that he did at any rate get well. *The Guardian Angel.*

JUNE TWENTY-NINTH

The very aim and end of our institutions is just this: that we may think what we like and say what we think. *The Professor.*

JUNE THIRTIETH

You know, that, if you had a bent tube, one arm of which was of the size of a pipe-stem, and the other big enough to hold the ocean, water would stand at the same height in one as in the other. Controversy equalizes fools and wise men in the same way,—and the fools know it.
The Autocrat.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



JULY

JULY FIRST

The woods at first convey the impression of profound repose, and yet, if you watch their ways with open ear, you find that the life which is in them is restless and nervous as that of a woman: the little twigs are crossing and twining and separating like slender fingers that cannot be still; the stray leaf is to be flattened into its place like a truant curl; the limbs sway and twist, impatient of their constrained attitude; and the rounded masses of foliage swell upward and subside with long soft sighs.

Elsie Venner.

JULY SECOND

Relations are apt to hate each other, just because they are too much alike.

Elsie Venner.

JULY THIRD

The common human qualities are more than all exceptional gifts.

The Guardian Angel.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



JULY FOURTH

I am an American,—and wherever I look up and see the stars and stripes overhead, that is home to me!

The Autocrat.

JULY FIFTH

Once in a while, even in our Northern cities, at noon, in a very hot summer's day, one may realize, by a sudden extension in his sphere of consciousness, how closely he is shut up for the most part.—Do you not remember something like this? July, between 1 and 2 P. M., Fahrenheit 90 deg., or thereabout. Windows all gaping, like the mouths of panting dogs. Long, stinging cry of a locust comes in from a tree, half a mile off; had forgotten there was such a tree. Baby's screams from a house several blocks distant;—never knew there were any babies in the neighborhood before. Tinman pounding something that clatters dreadfully,—very distinct but don't remember any tinman's shop near by. Horses stamping on pavement to get off flies. When you hear these four sounds, you may set it down as a warm day.

The Professor.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



JULY SIXTH

We talk about our free institutions ; they are nothing but a coarse outside machinery to secure the freedom of individual thought. The President of the United States is only the engine-driver of our broad-gauge mail train ; and every honest, independent thinker has a seat in the first-class cars behind him. *The Professor.*

JULY SEVENTH

A young farmer was urged to set out some apple-trees.—No, said he, they are too long growing, and I don't want to plant for other people. The young farmer's father was spoken to about it, but he, with better reason, alleged that apple-trees were slow and life was fleeting. At last some one mentioned it to the old grandfather of the young farmer. He had nothing else to do,—so he stuck in some trees. He lived long enough to drink barrels of cider made from the apples that grew on those trees.

The Autocrat.

JULY EIGHTH

A person's appetite should be at war with no other purse than his own.

Elsie Venner.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



JULY NINTH

People that make puns are like wanton boys that put coppers on the railroad tracks. They amuse themselves and other children, but their little trick may upset a freight train of conversation for the sake of a battered witticism.

The Autocrat.

JULY TENTH

Although in the abstract we all love beauty, and although, if we were sent naked souls into some ultramundane warehouse of soulless bodies and told to select one to our liking, we should each choose a handsome one, and never think of the consequences,—it is quite certain that beauty carries an atmosphere of repulsion as well as attraction with it, alike in both sexes.

Elsie Venner.

JULY ELEVENTH

Is there not one little drawer in your soul, my sweet reader, which no hand but yours has ever opened, and which none that have known you seem to have suspected? What does it hold? A sin?—I hope not.

The Professor.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



JULY TWELFTH

Under bad manners, as under graver faults, lies very commonly an overestimate of our special individuality, as distinguished from our generic humanity. It is just here that the very highest society asserts its superior breeding. Among truly elegant people of the highest *ton*, you will find more real equality in social intercourse than in a country village.

The Professor.

JULY THIRTEENTH

The greatest saint may be a sinner that never got down to hard pan. *The Guardian Angel.*

JULY FOURTEENTH

The soul of a man has a series of concentric envelopes round it, like the core of an onion, or the innermost of a nest of boxes. First, he has his natural garment of flesh and blood. Then, his artificial integuments, with their true skin of solid stuffs, their cuticle of lighter tissues, and their variously-tinted pigments. Thirdly, his domicile, be it a single chamber or a stately mansion. And then, the whole visible world, in which Time buttons him up as in a loose outside wrapper,

The Autocrat.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



JULY FIFTEENTH

Our young men come into active life so early, that, if our girls were not educated to something beyond mere practical duties, our material prosperity would outstrip our culture; as it often does in large places where money is made too rapidly.

Elsie Venner.

JULY SIXTEENTH

It is such a sad thing to be born a sneaking fellow, so much worse than to inherit a hump-back or a couple of club-feet, that I sometimes feel as if we ought to love the crippled souls, if I may use this expression, with a certain tenderness which we need not waste on noble natures. One who is born with such congenital incapacity that nothing can make a gentleman of him is entitled, not to our wrath, but to our profoundest sympathy. But as we cannot help hating the sight of these people, just as we do that of physical deformities, we gradually eliminate them from our society,—we love them, but open the window and let them go. *The Autocrat.*

JULY SEVENTEENTH

With most men life is like backgammon, half skill and half luck. *The Guardian Angel.*

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



JULY EIGHTEENTH

O Nature! bare thy loving breast
And give thy child one hour of rest,
One little hour to lie unseen
Beneath thy scarf of leafy green!

So curtained by a singing pine,
Its murmuring voice shall blend with mine,
Till, lost in dreams, my faltering lay
In sweeter music dies away. *Midsummer.*

JULY NINETEENTH

There are, at least, three real saints among
the women, to one among the men, in every de-
nomination.

The Professor.

JULY TWENTIETH

Marry a girl while she's in the gristle, and
you can shape her bones for her.

The Guardian Angel.

JULY TWENTY-FIRST

Ah, it is the pale passions that are the fiercest,
—it is the violence of the chill that gives the
measure of the fever!

The Autocrat.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



JULY TWENTY-SECOND

Plain food is quite enough for me;

Three courses are as good as ten;—

If Nature can subsist on three,

Thank Heaven for three. Amen!

I always thought cold victuals nice;—

My *choice* would be vanilla-ice.

Contentment.

JULY TWENTY-THIRD

We very commonly mean by beauty the way young girls look when there is nothing to hinder their looking the way Nature meant them to.

Elsie Venner.

JULY TWENTY-FOURTH

Women are apt to love the men who they think have the largest capacity of loving.

The Professor.

JULY TWENTY-FIFTH

The right of strict social discrimination of all things and persons, according to their merits, native or acquired, is one of the most precious republican privileges. I take the liberty to exercise it when I say that, *other things being equal*, in most relations of life I prefer a man of family.

The Autocrat.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



JULY TWENTY-SIXTH

Who knows it not,—this dead recoil
Of weary fibers stretched with toil;
The pulse that flutters faint and low
When Summer's seething breezes blow?

Midsummer.

JULY TWENTY-SEVENTH

It ain't everybody that can ride to heaven in
a C-spring shay; and life's a road that's got a
good many thank-you-ma'ams to go bumpin'
over.

The Guardian Angel.

JULY TWENTY-EIGHTH

Talk about it as much as you like,—one's
breeding shows itself nowhere more than in his
religion. A man should be a gentleman in his
hymns and prayers.

The Autocrat.

JULY TWENTY-NINTH

What I can't stand is the sight of these poor,
patient, toiling women, who never find out in
this life how good they are, and never know
what it is to be told they are angels while they
still wear the pleasing incumbrances of human-
ity.

Elsie Venner.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



JULY THIRTIETH

Nothing is better known than the distinction of social ranks which exists in every community, and nothing is harder to define. The great gentlemen and ladies of a place are its real lords and masters and mistresses; they are the *quality*, whether in a monarchy or a republic; mayors and governors and generals and senators and ex-presidents are nothing to them. How well we know this, and how seldom it finds a distinct expression!

The Professor.

JULY THIRTY-FIRST

Nature is liberal to her inmost soul,
She loves alike the tropic and the pole,
The storm's wild anthem, and the sunshine's
calm,

The arctic fungus, and the desert palm;
Loves them alike, and wills that each maintain
Its destined share of her divided reign;
No creeping moss refuse her crystal gem,
No soaring pine her cloudy diadem! *Astræa.*



AUGUST

AUGUST FIRST

Look at the flower of a morning-glory the evening before the dawn which is to see it unfold. The delicate petals are twisted in a spiral, which at the appointed hour, when the sunlight touches the hidden springs of its life, will uncoil itself and let the day into the chamber of its virgin heart. But the spiral must unwind by its own law, and the hand that shall try to hasten the process will only spoil the blossom.

The Guardian Angel.

AUGUST SECOND

I love to hear thine earnest voice,
Wherever thou art hid,
Thou testy little dogmatist,
Thou pretty Katydid!
Thou 'mindest me of gentlefolks,—
Old gentlefolks are they,—
Thou say'st an undisputed thing
In such a solemn way.

To an Insect.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



AUGUST THIRD

A mean man never agrees to anything without deliberately turning it over, so that he may see its dirty side, and, if he can, sweating the coin he pays for it. If an archangel should offer to save his soul for sixpence, he would try to find a sixpence with a hole in it.

Elsie Venner.

AUGUST FOURTH

It is not our beliefs that frighten us half so much as our fancies.

The Professor.

AUGUST FIFTH

A man is always pleased to have his most serious efforts praised, and the highest aspect of his nature get the most sunshine.

The Autocrat.

AUGUST SIXTH

Wear seemly gloves; not black, nor yet too light,

And least of all the pair that once was white;
Let the dead party where you told your loves
Bury in peace its dead bouquets and gloves;
Shave like the goat, if so your fancy bids,
But be a parent,—don't neglect your kids.

Urania.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



AUGUST SEVENTH

There are a great many more clouds than rains, and more rains than strokes of lightning, and more strokes of lightning than there are people killed.

Elsie Venner.

AUGUST EIGHTH

The world is always ready to receive talent with open arms. Very often it does not know what to do with genius. Talent is a docile creature. It bows its head meekly while the world slips the collar over it. It backs into the shafts like a lamb. It draws its load cheerfully, and is patient of the bit and of the whip. But genius is always impatient of its harness; its wild blood makes it hard to train.

The Autocrat.

AUGUST NINTH

Life is like that, one stitch at a time, taken patiently, and the pattern will come out all right, like the embroidery.

The Guardian Angel.

AUGUST TENTH

A lame man's opinion of dancing is not good for much.

The Professor.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



AUGUST ELEVENTH

I love the damask rose best of all. The flowers our mothers and sisters used to love and cherish, those which grow beneath our eaves and by our doorstep, are the ones we always love best.

The Autocrat.

AUGUST TWELFTH

We often move to the objects of supreme curiosity, not in the lines of castle and bishop on the chess-board, but with the knight's zigzag, making believe to ourselves that we are not after the thing coveted.

The Guardian Angel.

AUGUST THIRTEENTH

The arguments which the greatest of our schoolmen could not refute were two: the blood in men's veins, and the milk in women's breasts.

The Professor.

AUGUST FOURTEENTH

The virtue of the world is not mainly in its leaders. In the midst of the multitude which follows there is often something better than in the one that goes before.

Elsie Venner.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



AUGUST FIFTEENTH

Some people think that gold and truth are always to be washed for; but the wiser sort are of opinion that, unless there are so many grains to the peck of sand or nonsense respectively, it does not pay to wash for either, so long as one can find anything else to do. *Elsie Venner.*

AUGUST SIXTEENTH

But, O my friend! my favorite fellow-man!
If Nature made you on her modern plan,
Sooner than wander with your windpipe bare,—
The fruit of Eden ripening in the air,—
With that lean head-stalk, that protruding chin,
Wear standing collars, were they made of tin!
And have a neck-cloth—by the throat of Jove!
Cut from the funnel of a rusty stove!

Urania.

AUGUST SEVENTEENTH

Put an idea into your intelligence and leave it there an hour, a day, a year, without ever having occasion to refer to it. When, at last, you return to it, you do not find it as it was when acquired. It has domiciliated itself, so to speak,—become at home,—and integrated itself with the whole fabric of the mind.

The Autocrat.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



AUGUST EIGHTEENTH

Among the visible objects which hint to us fragments of this infinite secret for which our souls are waiting, the faces of women are those that carry the most legible hieroglyphics of the great mystery. There are women's faces, some real, some ideal, which contain something in them that becomes a positive element in our creed, so direct and palpable a revelation is it of the infinite purity and love. *The Professor.*

AUGUST NINETEENTH

It is not in the words others say to us, but in those other words which these make us say to ourselves, that we find our gravest lessons and our sharpest rebukes.

The Guardian Angel.

AUGUST TWENTIETH

Father of all! in Death's relentless claim
We read Thy mercy by its sterner name;
In the bright flower that decks the solemn bier,
We see Thy glory in its narrowed sphere;
In the deep lessons that affliction draws,
We trace the curves of Thy encircling laws;
In the long sigh that sets our spirits free,
We own the love that calls us back to Thee!

Pittsfield Cemetery.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



AUGUST TWENTY-FIRST

We jog quietly along, meeting the same faces, grinding over the same thoughts,—the gravel of the soul's highway,—now and then jarred against an obstacle we cannot crush, but must ride over or around as we best may, sometimes bringing short up against a disappointment, but still working along with the creaking and rattling and grating and jerking that belong to the journey of life, even in the smoothest-rolling vehicle. Suddenly we hear the deep underground reverberation that reveals the unsuspected depth of some abyss of thought or passion beneath us.

The Professor.

AUGUST TWENTY-SECOND

“Some things can be done as well as others.” A homely utterance, but it has virtue to overthrow all dynasties and hierarchies. These were all built up on the Old-World dogma that some things can *not* be done as well as others.

The Guardian Angel.

AUGUST TWENTY-THIRD

The man *with a future* has almost of necessity sense enough to see that any odious trick of speech or manners must be got rid of.

The Autocrat.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



AUGUST TWENTY-FOURTH

Getting married is jumping overboard, any way you look at it, and if you must save some woman from drowning an old maid, try to find one *with a cork jacket*, or she'll carry you down with her.

The Guardian Angel.

AUGUST TWENTY-FIFTH

If we compare the population of two villages of the same race and region, there is such a regularly graduated distribution and parallelism of character, that it seems as if Nature must turn out human beings in sets like chessmen.

Elsie Venner.

AUGUST TWENTY-SIXTH

It is the folly of the world constantly which confounds its wisdom. Not only out of the mouths of babes and sucklings, but out of the mouths of fools and cheats, we may often get our truest lessons. For the fool's judgment is a dog-vane that turns with a breath, and the cheat watches the clouds and sets his weathercock by them,—so that one shall often see by their pointing which way the winds of heaven are blowing, when the slow-wheeling arrows and feathers of what we call the Temples of Wisdom are turning to all points of the compass.

The Professor.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



AUGUST TWENTY-SEVENTH

Everybody likes and respects self-made men. It is a great deal better to be made in that way than not to be made at all. Are any of you younger people old enough to remember that Irishman's house on the marsh at Cambridgeport, which house he built from drain to chimney-top with his own hands? It took him a good many years to build it, and one could see that it was a little out of plumb, and a little wavy in outline, and a little queer and uncertain in general aspect. A regular hand could certainly have built a better house; but it was a very good house for a "self-made" carpenter's house, and people praised it, and said how remarkably well the Irishman had succeeded. They never thought of praising the fine blocks of houses a little farther on. *The Autocrat.*

AUGUST TWENTY-EIGHTH

Wherever two natures have a great deal in common, the conditions of a first-rate quarrel are furnished ready-made. *Elsie Venner.*

AUGUST TWENTY-NINTH

Humility is the first of the virtues—for other people. *The Professor.*

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



AUGUST THIRTIETH

You talk of the fire of genius. Many a blessed woman, who dies unsung and unremembered, has given out more of the real vital heat that keeps the life in human souls, without a spark flitting through her humble chimney to tell the world about it, than would set a dozen theories smoking, or a hundred odes simmering, in the brains of so many men of genius.

The Professor.

AUGUST THIRTY-FIRST

Leave what you've done for what you have to do ;

Don't be "consistent," but be simply true.

Don't catch the fidgets : you have found your place

Just in the focus of a nervous race,

Fretful to change, and rabid to discuss,

Full of excitements, always in a fuss ;—

Think of the patriarchs ; then compare as men

These lean-cheeked maniacs of the tongue and pen !

Run, if you like, but try to keep your breath ;

Work like a man, but don't be worked to death ;

And with new notions,—let me change the rule,

Don't strike the iron till it's slightly cool.

Urania.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



SEPTEMBER

SEPTEMBER FIRST

Though from the Hero's bleeding breast
Her pulses Freedom drew,
Though the white lilies in her crest
Sprang from that scarlet dew,—

While Valor's haughty champions wait
Till all their scars are shown,
Love walks unchallenged through the gate,
To sit beside the Throne!

The Two Armies.

SEPTEMBER SECOND

People are always glad to get hold of anything which limits their responsibility.

Elsie Venner.

SEPTEMBER THIRD

You may teach a quadruped to walk on his hind legs, but he is always wanting to be on all-fours.

The Professor.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



SEPTEMBER FOURTH

I'm not a chicken ; I have seen
Full many a chill September,
And though I was a youngster then,
That gale I well remember ;
The day before, my kite-string snapped,
And I, my kite pursuing,
The wind whisked off my palm-leaf hat ;—
For me two storms were brewing !
The September Gale.

SEPTEMBER FIFTH

Faith always implies the disbelief of a lesser fact in favor of a greater. A little mind often sees the unbelief, without seeing the belief, of a large one.
The Professor.

SEPTEMBER SIXTH

The seed that wasteful Autumn cast
To waver on its stormy blast,
Long o'er the wintry desert tost,
Its living germ has never lost ;
Dropped by the weary tempest's wing,
It feels the kindling ray of Spring,
And starting from its dream of death,
Pours on the air its perfumed breath.
To an English Friend.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



SEPTEMBER SEVENTH

Do you know that every man has a religious belief peculiar to himself? Smith is always a Smithite. He takes in exactly Smith's-worth of knowledge, Smith's-worth of truth, of beauty, of divinity. And Brown has from time immemorial been trying to burn him, to excommunicate him, to anonymous-article him, because he did not take in Brown's-worth of knowledge, truth, beauty, divinity. He cannot do it, any more than a pint-pot can hold a quart, or a quart-pot be filled by a pint. Iron is essentially the same everywhere and always; but the sulphate of iron is never the same as the carbonate of iron. Truth is invariable; but the *Smithate* of truth must always differ from the *Brownate* of truth.

The Professor.

SEPTEMBER EIGHTH

Men are tattooed with their special beliefs like so many South Sea Islanders; but a real human heart, with divine love in it, beats with the same glow under all the patterns of earth's thousand tribes.

Elsie Venner.

SEPTEMBER NINTH

The cut nails of machine-divinity may be driven in, but they won't clinch.

The Professor.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



SEPTEMBER TENTH

No more the summer floweret charms,
The leaves will soon be sere,
And Autumn folds his jeweled arms
Around the dying year.
The Island Hunting Song.

SEPTEMBER ELEVENTH

Ah, the young girl! I am sure that she can hide nothing from me. Her skin is so transparent that one can almost count her heart-beats by the flushes they send into her cheeks. She does not seem to be shy, either. I think she does not know enough of danger to be timid. She seems to me like one of those birds that travelers tell of, found in remote, uninhabited islands, who, having never received any wrong at the hand of man, show no alarm at and hardly any particular consciousness of his presence.

The Professor.

SEPTEMBER TWELFTH

A plain girl in a simple dress, if she has only a pleasant voice, may seem almost a beauty in the rosy twilight. The nearer she comes to being handsome, the more ornament she will bear, and the more she can defy the sunshine or the chandelier. *The Guardian Angel.*

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES

SEPTEMBER THIRTEENTH

Peace to the ever murmuring race!
And when the latest one
Shall fold in death her feeble wings
Beneath the autumn sun,
Then shall she raise her fainting voice
And lift her drooping lid,
And then the child of future years
Shall hear what Katy did.

To an Insect.

SEPTEMBER FOURTEENTH

It is very easy to criticize other people's modes of dealing with their children. Outside observers see results; parents see processes. To be a parent is almost to be a fatalist.

Elsie Venner.

SEPTEMBER FIFTEENTH

I think you will find that people who honestly mean to be true really contradict themselves much more rarely than those who try to be "consistent." But a great many things we say can be made to appear contradictory, simply because they are partial views of a truth, and may often look unlike at first, as a front view of a face and its profile often do.

The Professor.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



SEPTEMBER SIXTEENTH

I don't want a woman to weigh me in a balance; there are men enough for that sort of work. The judicial character isn't captivating in females, sir. A woman fascinates a man quite as often by what she overlooks as by what she sees. Love prefers twilight to daylight; and a man doesn't think much of, nor care much for, a woman outside of his household, unless he can couple the idea of love, past, present, or future, with her. I don't believe the Devil would give half as much for the services of a sinner as he would for those of one of these folks that are always doing virtuous acts in a way to make them unpleasing. *The Professor.*

SEPTEMBER SEVENTEENTH

We are all splashed and streaked with sentiments,—not with precisely the same tints, or in exactly the same patterns, but by the same hand and from the same palette. *The Autocrat.*

SEPTEMBER EIGHTEENTH

Like many people of strong and imperious temper, he was soft-voiced and very gentle in his address, when he had no special reason for being otherwise. *Elsie Venner.*

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



SEPTEMBER NINETEENTH

Now, when genius allies itself with character, the world is very apt to think character has the best of the bargain. A brilliant woman marries a plain, manly fellow, with a simple intellectual mechanism: we have all seen such cases. The world often stares a good deal and wonders. She should have taken that other, with a far more complex mental machinery. She might have had a watch with the philosophical compensation-balance, with the metaphysical index, which can split a second into tenths, with the musical chime which can turn every quarter of an hour into melody. She has chosen a plain one, that keeps good time, and that is all. Let her alone! She knows what she is about. Genius has an infinitely deeper reverence for character than character can have for genius.

The Professor.

SEPTEMBER TWENTIETH

A man's love is the measure of his fitness for good or bad company here or elsewhere.

Elsie Venner.

SEPTEMBER TWENTY-FIRST

The most pathetic image in the world to many women is that of themselves in tears.

The Guardian Angel.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



SEPTEMBER TWENTY-SECOND

She came of a cultivated stock, never rich, but long trained to intellectual callings. A thousand decencies, amenities, reticences, graces, which no one thinks of until he misses them, are the traditional right of those who spring from such families.

Elsie Venner.

SEPTEMBER TWENTY-THIRD

Once more: speak clearly, if you speak at all;
Carve every word before you let it fall. *Urania.*

SEPTEMBER TWENTY-FOURTH

Now I tell you a poem must be kept *and used*, like a meerschaum, or a violin. A poem is just as porous as the meerschaum;—the more porous it is, the better. I mean to say that a genuine poem is capable of absorbing an indefinite amount of the essence of our own humanity,—its tenderness, its heroism, its regrets, its aspirations, so as to be gradually stained through with a divine secondary color derived from ourselves. So you see it must take time to bring the sentiment of a poem into harmony with our nature, by staining ourselves through every thought and image our being can penetrate.

The Autocrat.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



SEPTEMBER TWENTY-FIFTH

Wealth's wasteful tricks I will not learn,

Nor ape the glittering upstart fool;—

Shall not carved tables serve my turn,

But *all* must be of buhl?

Give grasping pomp its double share,—

I ask but *one* recumbent chair.

Contentment.

SEPTEMBER TWENTY-SIXTH .

You forget what a miserable surface-matter this language is in which we try to reproduce our interior state of being. Articulation is a shallow trick. From the light Poh! which we toss off from our lips as we fling a nameless scribbler's impertinence into our waste-baskets, to the gravest utterance which comes from our throats in our moments of deepest need, is only a space of some three or four inches. Words, which are a set of clickings, hissings, lispings, and so on, mean very little compared to tones and expression of the features. *The Professor.*

SEPTEMBER TWENTY-SEVENTH

No life worth naming ever comes to good

If always nourished on the self-same food.

Astræa.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



SEPTEMBER TWENTY-EIGHTH

Clear the brown path, to meet his coulter's
gleam!

Lo! on he comes, behind his smoking team,
With toil's bright dew-drops on his sunburnt
brow,

The lord of earth, the hero of the plow!

The Plowman.

SEPTEMBER TWENTY-NINTH

Keep your temper—one angry man is as good
as another.

Elsie Venner.

SEPTEMBER THIRTIETH

He must be a poor creature that does not often repeat himself. Imagine the author of the excellent piece of advice, "Know thyself," never alluding to that sentiment again during the course of a protracted existence! Why, the truths a man carries about with him are his tools; and do you think a carpenter is bound to use the same plane but once to smooth a knotty board with, or to hang up his hammer after it has driven its first nail? A thought is often original, though you have uttered it a hundred times. It has come to you over a new route, by a new and express train of associations.

The Professor.



OCTOBER

OCTOBER FIRST

Not in the world of light alone,
Where God has built his blazing throne,
Nor yet alone in earth below,
With belted seas that come and go,
And endless isles of sunlit green,
Is all thy Maker's glory seen:
Look in upon thy wondrous frame,—
Eternal wisdom still the same!

The Living Temple.

OCTOBER SECOND

An emotion which can shape itself in language
opens the gate for itself into the great com-
munity of human affections.

Elsie Venner.

OCTOBER THIRD

Without wearing any mask we are conscious
of, we have a special face for each friend.

The Professor.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



OCTOBER FOURTH

How many women are born too finely organized in sense and soul for the highway they must walk with feet unshod! Life is adjusted to the wants of the stronger sex. There are plenty of torrents to be crossed in its journey; but their stepping-stones are measured by the stride of man, and not of woman.

The Professor.

OCTOBER FIFTH

But, like a child in ocean's arms,
We strive against the stream,
Each moment farther from the shore
Where life's young fountains gleam;—
Each moment fainter wave the fields,
And wider rolls the sea;
The mist grows dark,—the sun goes down,—
Day breaks,—and where are we?

Departed Days.

OCTOBER SIXTH

A gentleman says yes to a great many things without stopping to think: a shabby fellow is known by his caution in answering questions, for fear of compromising his pocket or himself.

Elsie Venner.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



OCTOBER SEVENTH

If one has a house which he has lived and always means to live in, he pleases himself with the thought of all the conveniences it offers him, and thinks little of its wants and imperfections. But once having made up his mind to move to a better, every incommmodity starts out upon him, until the very ground-plan of it seems to have changed in his mind, and his thoughts and affections, each one of them packing up its little bundle of circumstances, have quitted their several chambers and nooks and migrated to the new home, long before its apartments are ready to receive their bodily tenant. *The Professor.*

OCTOBER EIGHTH

There never was a guild of dealers or a company of craftsmen that did not need sharp looking after. *The Autocrat.*

OCTOBER NINTH

I tell you what, philosopher, if all the longest
heads
That ever knocked their sinciputs in stretching
fine old folks
Were round one great mahogany, I'd beat those
fine old folks
With twenty dishes, twenty fools, and twenty
clever jokes. *Nux Postcanatica.*

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



OCTOBER TENTH

Where, oh where are the visions of morning,
Fresh as the dews of our prime?
Gone, like tenants that quit without warning,
Down the back entry of time.

Questions and Answers.

OCTOBER ELEVENTH

Nobody talks much that doesn't say unwise things, things he did not mean to say; as no person plays much without striking a false note sometimes. Talk, to me, is only spading up the ground for crops of thought. I can't answer for what will turn up. If I could, it wouldn't be talking, but "speaking my piece." Better, I think, the hearty abandonment of one's self to the suggestions of the moment, at the risk of an occasional slip of the tongue, perceived the instant it escapes, but just one syllable too late, than the royal reputation of never saying a foolish thing.

The Professor.

OCTOBER TWELFTH

It is wonderful how men and women know their peers. If two stranger queens, sole survivors of two shipwrecked vessels, were cast, half-naked, on a rock together, each would at once address the other as "Our Royal Sister."

Elsie Venner.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



OCTOBER THIRTEENTH

Good dressing, quiet ways, low tones of voice, lips that can wait, and eyes that do not wander,—shyness of personalities, except in certain intimate communions,—to be *light in hand* in conversation, to have ideas, but to be able to make talk, if necessary, without them,—to belong to the company you are in, and not to yourself,—to have nothing in your dress or furniture so fine that you cannot afford to spoil it and get another like it, yet to preserve the harmonies throughout your person and dwelling; I should say that this was a fair capital of manners to begin with.

The Professor.

OCTOBER FOURTEENTH

Self-respect and respect for others,—the sensitive consciousness poises itself in these as the ship's binnacle balances itself and maintains its true level within the two concentric rings which suspend it on their pivots. *Elsie Venner.*

OCTOBER FIFTEENTH

All lecturers, all professors, all schoolmasters, have ruts and grooves in their minds into which their conversation is perpetually sliding.

The Autocrat.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



OCTOBER SIXTEENTH

When the first larvæ on the elm are seen,
The crawling wretches, like its leaves, are green ;
Ere chill October shakes the latest down,
They, like the foliage, change their tint to
brown ;
On the blue flower a bluer flower you spy,
You stretch to pluck it—'tis a butterfly ;
The flattened tree-toads so resemble bark,
They're hard to find as Ethiops in the dark.
So by long living on a single lie,
Nay, on one truth, will creatures get its dye ;
Red, yellow, green, they take their subject's
hue,—
Except when squabbling turns them black and
blue! *Astræa.*

OCTOBER SEVENTEENTH

Man has his will,—but woman has her way !
This is It.

OCTOBER EIGHTEENTH

One load of corn goes to the sty, and makes
the fat of swine,—another goes to the farm-
house, and becomes the muscle that clothes the
right arms of heroes. It isn't where a pawn
stands on the board that makes the difference,
but what the game round it is when it is on this
or that square. *The Professor.*

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



OCTOBER NINETEENTH

Between two breaths what crowded mysteries
lie,—

The first short gasp, the last and long-drawn
sigh!

Like phantoms painted on the magic slide,
Forth from the darkness of the past we glide,
As living shadows for a moment seen
In airy pageant on the eternal screen,
Traced by a ray from one unchanging flame,
Then seek the dust and stillness whence we came.

Urania.

OCTOBER TWENTIETH

Our ice-eyed brain-women are really admirable, if we only ask of them just what they can give, and no more.

The Professor.

OCTOBER TWENTY-FIRST

Real Republicanism is stern and severe; its essence is not in forms of government, but in the omnipotence of public opinion which grows out of it.

The Autocrat.

OCTOBER TWENTY-SECOND

The difference between the real and the ideal objects of love must not exceed a fixed maximum. The heart's vision cannot unite them stereoscopically into a single image, if the divergence passes certain limits.

Elsie Venner.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



OCTOBER TWENTY-THIRD

Justice! A good man respects the rights even of brute matter and arbitrary symbols. If he writes the same word twice in succession, by accident, he always erases the one that stands *second*; has not the first-comer the prior right? This act of abstract justice, which I trust many of my readers, like myself, have often performed, is a curious anti-illustration, by the way, of the absolute wickedness of human dispositions. Why doesn't a man always strike out the *first* of the two words, to gratify his diabolical love of *injustice*? *The Professor.*

OCTOBER TWENTY-FOURTH

What are the great faults of conversation? Want of ideas, want of words, want of manners, are the principal ones, I suppose you think. I don't doubt it, but I will tell you what I have found spoil more good talks than anything else;—long arguments on special points between people who differ on the fundamental principles upon which these points depend. *The Autocrat.*

OCTOBER TWENTY-FIFTH

Life is dreadful uncerting, said the poor relation.
The Professor.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



OCTOBER TWENTY-SIXTH

The idea that in this world each young person is to wait until he or she finds that precise counterpart who alone of all creation was meant for him or her, and then fall instantly in love with it, is pretty enough, only it is not Nature's way. It is not at all essential that all pairs of human beings should be, as we sometimes say of particular couples, "born for each other." Sometimes a man or a woman is made a great deal better and happier in the end for having had to conquer the faults of the one beloved, and make the fitness not found at first, by gradual assimilation.

The Professor.

OCTOBER TWENTY-SEVENTH

Truants from love, we dream of wrath;
Oh, rather let us trust the more!
Through all the wanderings of the path,
We still can see our Father's door!

The Crooked Footpaths.

OCTOBER TWENTY-EIGHTH

The outward forms the inner man reveal,—
We guess the pulp before we cut the peel.

Urania.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



OCTOBER TWENTY-NINTH

I have been a hundred times struck with the circumstance that the most remote facts are constantly striking each other; just as vessels starting from ports thousands of miles apart pass close to each other in the naked breadth of the ocean.

The Professor.

OCTOBER THIRTIETH

Blushing means nothing, in some persons; in others, it betrays a profound inward agitation,—a perturbation of the feelings far more trying than the passions which with many easily moved persons break forth in tears.

Elsie Venner.

OCTOBER THIRTY-FIRST

Nature and custom would, no doubt, agree in conceding to all males the right of at least two distinct looks at every comely female countenance, without any infraction of the rules of courtesy or the sentiment of respect. The first look is necessary to define the person of the individual one meets so as to avoid it in passing. Any unusual attraction detected in a first glance is a sufficient apology for a second, not a prolonged and impertinent stare, but an appreciating homage of the eyes.

The Autocrat.



NOVEMBER

NOVEMBER FIRST

To those who know the Indian summer of our Northern States, it is needless to describe the influence it exerts on the senses and the soul. The stillness of the landscape in that beautiful time is as if the planet were *sleeping*, like a top, before it begins to rock with the winds of autumn. All natures seem to find themselves more truly in its light; love grows more tender, memory sees farther back into the past.

The Guardian Angel.

NOVEMBER SECOND

Then fill a fair and honest cup, and bear it
straight to me;
The goblet hallows all it holds, whate'er the
liquid be;
And may the cherubs on its face protect me
from the sin,

That dooms one to those dreadful words,—

“My dear, where *have* you been?”

On Lending a Punch-Bowl.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



NOVEMBER THIRD

Where, oh where are life's lilies and roses,
Nursed in the golden dawn's smile?
Dead as the bulrushes round little Moses,
On the old banks of the Nile.

Questions and Answers.

NOVEMBER FOURTH

Talking is like playing on the harp: there is as much in laying the hand on the strings to stop their vibrations as in twanging them to bring out their music.

The Autocrat.

NOVEMBER FIFTH

Oh, what a precious book the one would be
That taught observers what they're *not* to see!

Urania.

NOVEMBER SIXTH

Perhaps too far in these considerate days
Has Patience carried her submissive ways;
Wisdom has taught us to be calm and meek,
To take one blow and turn the other cheek;
It is not written what a man shall do,
If the rude caitiff strike the other too!

Astræa.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



NOVEMBER SEVENTH

Sing the sweet song of other days,
Serenely placid, safely true,
And o'er the present's parching ways
Thy verse distills like evening dew.

But speak in words of living power,—
They fall like drops of scalding rain
That plashed before the burning shower
Swept o'er the cities of the plain!

Saint Anthony, the Reformer.

NOVEMBER EIGHTH

A man's opinions, look you, are generally of much more value than his arguments. These last are made by his brain, and perhaps he does not believe the proposition they tend to prove—as is often the case with paid lawyers; but opinions are formed by our whole nature—brain, heart, instinct, brute life, everything all our experience has shaped for us by contact with the whole circle of our being.

The Professor.

NOVEMBER NINTH

The true essentials of a feast are only fun
and feed.

Nux Postcœnatica.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



NOVEMBER TENTH

I love you is all the secret that many, nay, most women have to tell. When that is said, they are like China-crackers on the morning of the fifth of July. And just as that little patriotic implement is made with a slender train which leads to the magazine in its interior, so a sharp eye can almost always see the train leading from a young girl's eye or lip to the "I love you" in her heart. *The Professor.*

NOVEMBER ELEVENTH

On the whole, I had rather judge men's minds by comparing their thoughts with my own, than judge of thoughts by knowing who utter them. I must do one or the other. It does not follow, of course, that I may not recognize another man's thoughts as broader and deeper than my own; but that does not necessarily change my opinion, otherwise this would be at the mercy of every superior mind that held a different one. *The Autocrat.*

NOVEMBER TWELFTH

Look in his face, to meet thy neighbor's soul,
Not on his garments, to detect a hole.
Urania.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



NOVEMBER THIRTEENTH

The rapidity with which ideas grow old in our memories is in a direct ratio to the squares of their importance. Their apparent age runs up miraculously, like the value of diamonds, as they increase in magnitude. A great calamity, for instance, is as old as the trilobites an hour after it has happened. It stains backward through all the leaves we have turned over in the book of life, before its blot of tears or of blood is dry on the page we are turning. For this we seem to have lived; it was foreshadowed in dreams that we leaped out of in the cold sweat of terror; in the "dissolving views" of dark day-visions; all omens pointed to it; all paths led to it. After the tossing half-forgetfulness of the first sleep that follows such an event, it comes upon us afresh, as a surprise, at waking; in a few moments it is old again,—old as eternity.

The Autocrat.

NOVEMBER FOURTEENTH

All of us have a little speck of fight underneath our peace and good-will to men—just a speck, for revolutions and great emergencies, you know—so that we should not submit to be trodden quite flat by the first heavy-heeled aggressor that came along.

The Professor.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



NOVEMBER FIFTEENTH

How many of our cherished beliefs are like those drinking-glasses of the ancient pattern, that serve us well so long as we keep them in our hand, but spill all if we attempt to set them down!

The Autocrat.

NOVEMBER SIXTEENTH

As o'er the glacier's frozen sheet
Breathes soft the Alpine rose,
So, through life's desert springing sweet
The flower of friendship grows.

A Song of Other Days.

NOVEMBER SEVENTEENTH

Stillness of person and steadiness of features are signal marks of good-breeding. Vulgar persons can't sit still, or at least, they must work their limbs or features. *The Professor.*

NOVEMBER EIGHTEENTH

Children of wealth or want, to each is given
One spot of green, and all the blue of heaven!
Enough, if these their outward shows impart;
The rest is thine,—the scenery of the heart.

Urania.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



NOVEMBER NINETEENTH

The feeble seabirds, blinded in the storms,
On some tall lighthouse dash their little forms,
And the rude granite scatters for their pains
Those small deposits that were meant for brains.
Yet the proud fabric in the morning's sun
Stands all unconscious of the mischief done;
Still the red beacon pours its evening rays
For the lost pilot with as full a blaze,
Nay, shines, all radiance, o'er the scattered
 fleet
Of gulls and boobies brainless at its feet.

From a Medical Poem.

NOVEMBER TWENTIETH

What is it, of all your experiences, of all your
thoughts, of all your misdoings, that lies at
the very bottom of the great heap of acts of
consciousness which make up your past life?
What should you most dislike to tell your
nearest friend? Be so good as to pause for a
brief space, and shut the volume you hold, with
your finger between the pages. Oh, that is it!

The Autocrat.

NOVEMBER TWENTY-FIRST

The man implies the woman.

The Professor.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



NOVEMBER TWENTY-SECOND

I tell you this odd thing: there are a good many persons, who, through the habit of making other folks uncomfortable, by finding fault with all their cheerful enjoyments, at last get up a kind of hostility to comfort in general, even in their own persons. The correlative to loving our neighbors as ourselves is hating ourselves as we hate our neighbors.

The Professor.

NOVEMBER TWENTY-THIRD

Sweet is the scene where genial friendship plays
The pleasing game of interchanging praise.

Terpsichore.

NOVEMBER TWENTY-FOURTH

Gentility is a fine thing, not to be undervalued; but humanity comes before that.

The Professor.

NOVEMBER TWENTY-FIFTH

For baser tribes the rivers flow
That know not wine or song;
Man wants but little drink below,
But wants that little strong.

A Song of Other Days.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



NOVEMBER TWENTY-SIXTH

Truth's sleepless watchman on her midnight
tower,
Whose lamp burns brightest when the tempests
lower—

Oh, who can tell with what a leaden flight
Drag the long watches of his weary night;
While at his feet the hoarse and blinding gale
Strews the torn wreck and bursts the fragile
sail,

When stars have faded, when the wave is dark,
When rocks and sands embrace the foundering
bark,

And still he pleads with unavailing cry,
Behold the light, O wanderer, look or die!

A Modest Request.

NOVEMBER TWENTY-SEVENTH

People never hear their own voices,—any more than they see their own faces. There is not even a looking-glass for the voice. Of course, there is something audible to us when we speak; but that something is not our own voice as it is known to all our acquaintances. How pleasant it would be, if in another state of being we could have shapes like our own former selves for playthings!

The Autocrat.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



NOVEMBER TWENTY-EIGHTH

Once in a while one meets with a single soul greater than all the living pageant that passes before it. As the pale astronomer sits in his study with sunken eyes and thin fingers, and weighs Uranus or Neptune as in a balance, so there are meek, slight women who have weighed all that this planetary life can offer, and hold it like a bauble in the palm of their slender hands.

The Autocrat.

NOVEMBER TWENTY-NINTH

Concert is just as natural a thing to human minds as a center is to a circle. *The Professor.*

NOVEMBER THIRTIETH

I am too much a lover of genius, I sometimes think, and too often get impatient with dull people, so that, in their weak talk, where nothing is taken for granted, I look forward to some future possible state of development, when a gesture passing between a beautiful human soul and an archangel shall signify as much as the complete history of a planet. Yet, when a strong brain is weighed with a true heart, it seems to me like balancing a bubble against a wedge of gold.

The Professor.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



DECEMBER

DECEMBER FIRST

Behold the rocky wall
That down its sloping sides
Pours the swift raindrops, blending, as they
fall,
In rushing river-tides!

Yon stream, whose sources run
Turned by a pebble's edge,
Is Athabasca, rolling toward the sun
Through the cleft mountain-ledge.

The slender rill had strayed,
But for the slanting stone,
To evening's ocean, with the tangled braid
Of foam-flecked Oregon.

So from the heights of Will
Life's parting stream descends,
And, as a moment turns its slender rill,
Each widening torrent bends,—

From the same cradle's side,
From the same mother's knee,—
One to long darkness and the frozen tide,
One to the Peaceful Sea!

The Two Streams.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



DECEMBER SECOND

What is there quite so profoundly human as an old man's memory of a mother who died in his earlier years? Mother she remains till manhood, and by-and-by she grows to be as a sister; and at last, when, wrinkled and bowed and broken, he looks back upon her in her fair youth, he sees in the sweet image he caresses not his parents, but, as it were, his child.

The Professor.

DECEMBER THIRD

Women decant their affections, sweet and sound, out of the old bottles into the new ones, —off from the lees of the last generation, clear and bright, into the clean vessels just made ready to receive it. *The Guardian Angel.*

DECEMBER FOURTH

After all, if we think of it, most of the world's loves and friendships have been between people that could not read nor spell.

The Autocrat.

DECEMBER FIFTH

A man always loves a woman, and a woman a man, unless some good reason exists to the contrary.

Elsie Venner.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



DECEMBER SIXTH

Women are such strange creatures! Is there any trick that love and their own fancies do not play them? Just see how they marry!

The Professor.

DECEMBER SEVENTH

Audacious self-esteem, with good ground for it, is always imposing.

The Autocrat.

DECEMBER EIGHTH

Lord of all life, below, above,
Whose light is truth, whose warmth is love,
Before thy ever-blazing throne
We ask no luster of our own.

Grant us thy truth to make us free,
And kindling hearts that burn for thee,
Till all thy living altars claim
One holy light, one heavenly flame!

A Sun-Day Hymn.

DECEMBER NINTH

It isn't what a man thinks or says, but when and where and to whom he thinks and says it.

The Professor.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



DECEMBER TENTH

The pledge of Friendship! it is still divine,
Though watery floods have quenched its burn-
ing wine;

Whatever vase the sacred drops may hold,
The gourd, the shell, the cup of beaten gold,
Around its brim the hand of Nature throws
A garland sweeter than the banquet's rose.
Bright are the blushes of the vine-wreathed
bowl,

Warm with the sunshine of Anacreon's soul,
But dearer memories gild the tasteless wave
That fainting Sidney perished as he gave.

A Sentiment.

DECEMBER ELEVENTH

It does not follow that I wish to be pickled in
brine because I like a salt-water plunge.

The Professor.

DECEMBER TWELFTH

Money kept for two or three generations
transforms a race,—I don't mean merely in
manners and hereditary culture, but in blood
and bone. Money buys air and sunshine, in
which children grow up more kindly, of course,
than in close, back streets; it buys country
places to give them happy and healthy summers.

The Autocrat.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



DECEMBER THIRTEENTH

My broken Mirror! faithless, yet beloved,

Thou who canst smile, and smile alike on all,
Oft do I leave thee, oft again return,

I scorn the siren, but obey the call;
I hate thy falsehood, while I fear thy truth,
But most I love thee, flattering friend of youth.

To My Companions.

DECEMBER FOURTEENTH

All we can do with books of human experience is to make them alive again with something borrowed from our own lives. We can make a book alive for us just in proportion to its resemblance in essence or in form to our own experience.

The Autocrat.

DECEMBER FIFTEENTH

The soul, having studied the article of which it finds itself proprietor, thinks, after a time, it knows it pretty well. But there is this difference between its view and that of a person looking at us:—we look from within, and see nothing but the mould formed by the elements in which we are incased: other observers look from without, and see us as living statues.

The Professor.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



DECEMBER SIXTEENTH

Not in the world of light alone,
Where God has built His blazing throne,
Nor yet alone in earth below,
With belted seas that come and go,
And endless isles of sunlit green,
Is all thy Maker's glory seen:
Look in upon thy wondrous frame,—
Eternal wisdom still the same!

The Living Temple.

DECEMBER SEVENTEENTH

I hope I love good people, not for their sake,
but for my own. *The Professor.*

DECEMBER EIGHTEENTH

A calm, clear mind, not subject to the spasms
and crises which are so often met with in cre-
ative or intensely perceptive natures, is the
best basis for love or friendship.

The Autocrat.

DECEMBER NINETEENTH

Be firm! one constant element in luck
Is genuine, solid, old Teutonic pluck;
See you tall shaft; it felt the earthquake's thrill,
Clung to its base, and greets the sunrise still.

Urania.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



DECEMBER TWENTIETH

Though temples crowd the crumbled brink
O'erhanging truth's eternal flow,
Their tablets bold with *what we think*,
Their echoes dumb to *what we know*;

That one unquestioned text we read,
All doubt beyond, all fear above,
Nor crackling pile nor cursing creed
Can burn or blot it: God is Love!

What We All Think.

DECEMBER TWENTY-FIRST

I am proud to say, that Nature has so far enriched me, that I cannot own so much as a *duck* without seeing in it as pretty a swan as ever swam.

The Autocrat.

DECEMBER TWENTY-SECOND

And what if court or castle vaunt
Its children loftier born?—

Who heeds the silken tassel's flaunt
Beside the golden corn?

They ask not for the dainty toil
Of ribboned knights and earls,

The daughters of the virgin soil,
Our free-born Yankee girls!

Our Yankee Girls.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



DECEMBER TWENTY-THIRD

Home of our childhood! how affection clings
And hovers round thee with her seraph wings!
Dearer thy hills, though clad in autumn brown,
Than fairest summits which the cedars crown!
Sweeter the fragrance of thy summer breeze
Than all Arabia breathes along the seas!
The stranger's gale wafts home the exile's sigh,
For the heart's temple is its own blue sky!

Poetry—A Metrical Essay.

DECEMBER TWENTY-FOURTH

'Tis the heart's current lends the cup its glow,
Whate'er the fountain whence the draught may
flow.

A Sentiment.

DECEMBER TWENTY-FIFTH

The choral host had closed the angel's strain
Sung to the midnight watch on Bethlehem's
plain;
And now the shepherds, hastening on their way,
Sought the still hamlet where the Infant lay.

"Joy, joy to earth! Behold the hallowed morn!
In David's city Christ the Lord is born!
'Glory to God!' let angels shout on high,—
'Good-will to men!' the listening Earth reply!"

A Mother's Secret.

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



DECEMBER TWENTY-SIXTH

And if I should live to be
The last leaf upon the tree
In the spring,
Let them smile, as I do now,
At the old forsaken bough
Where I cling. *The Last Leaf.*

DECEMBER TWENTY-SEVENTH

Life, as we call it, is nothing but the edge of the boundless ocean of existence where it comes on soundings. In this view, I do not see anything so fit to talk about, or half so interesting, as that which relates to the innumerable majority of our fellow-creatures, the dead-living, who are hundreds of thousands to one of the live-living, and with whom we all potentially belong. *The Professor.*

DECEMBER TWENTY-EIGHTH

Venice built her Ducal Palace, and her Church of St. Mark, and her Casa d'Oro, and the rest of her golden houses; and Venice had great pictures and good music; and Venice had a Golden Book, in which all the large tax-payers had their names written;—But all that did not make Venice the brain of Italy. *The Professor.*

FROM DAY TO DAY WITH HOLMES



DECEMBER TWENTY-NINTH

Call him not old, whose visionary brain
Holds o'er the past its undivided reign.
For him in vain the envious seasons roll
Who bears eternal summer in his soul.
If yet the minstrel's song, the poet's lay,
Spring with her birds, or children with their
 play,
Or maiden's smile, or heavenly dream of art
Stir the few life-drops creeping round his
 heart,—
Turn to the record where his years are told,—
Count his gray hairs,—they cannot make him
 old! *Call Him Not Old.*

DECEMBER THIRTIETH

God bless all good women!—to their soft
hands and pitying hearts we must all come at
last! *The Autocrat.*

DECEMBER THIRTY-FIRST

We will not speak of years to-night;
For what have years to bring,
But larger floods of love and light
And sweeter songs to sing?
 At a Birthday Festival.

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